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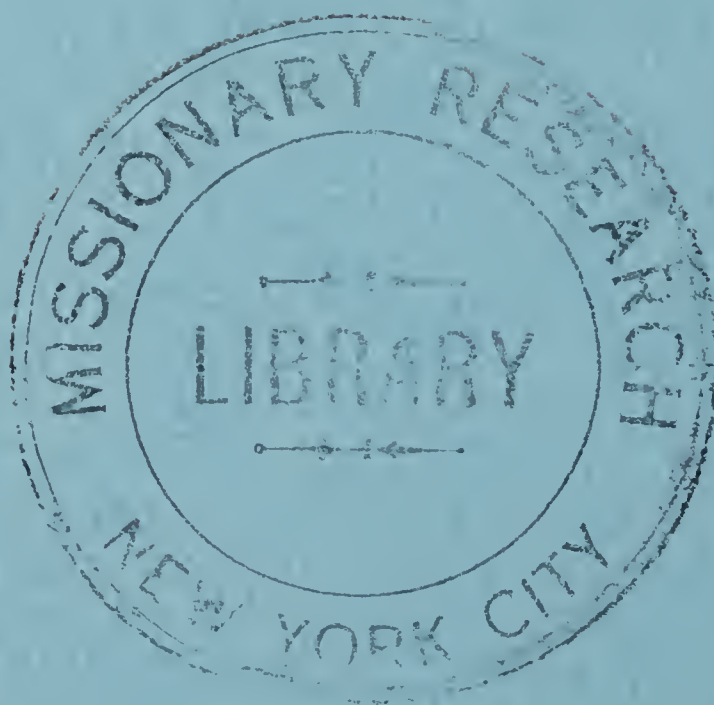
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THE MAJOR ARABIC BIBLES

John Alexander Thompson





THE MAJOR ARABIC BIBLES

Their Origin and Nature

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AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, NEW YORK

1956

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These articles were first published in *The Bible Translator*, Quarterly Magazine of the United Bible Societies, Vol. VI (1955), pages 1-12, 51-55, 98-106 and 146-150.

FOREWORD

During the last decade there have been increasing signs in many parts of the world of that renewal of life within the Church which must herald any new forward movement in evangelism. One most significant indication is the widespread interest that is being taken in the question of Bible revision. The bare figures of the various Bible Societies show that there has never been a time when so many major versions of the Scripture were being re-examined or so much effort being put forth by responsible bodies to ensure that the findings of modern scholarship and the insights of the last two generations should be reflected in the versions that are placed in the hands of the man in the street. This process naturally creates problems and tensions of its own, as all those who have had the task of investigating the need for revision in various languages have discovered for themselves. Invariably one finds that there is a group of better informed leaders within the Church and Christian community aware of the deficiencies of the existing versions and of the manifold ways in which they could be improved in the light of developments in the fields of linguistics and Biblical scholarship. Sometimes it is comparatively easy to move the Church to action in co-operation with the scholars. This is usually the case with the more recent missionary versions that have been made in Africa, for instance, where developments in the language have been so rapid and where missionary influence is still strong in relation to the rapidly growing church. There are many instances, however, where the longer a version goes without revision, the more deeply it becomes entrenched in the life of the church and people and the more difficult to counter the objections to revision popularly raised within the Christian constituency.

Nowhere is this seen to be more true than in the Islamic world where the Christian Church after many years of missionary effort still remains a very small minority. Yet during the last thirty years there have been marked signs that scholars, particularly in the Arab world and in Persia, have been feeling that the time was near when more adequate versions should be given to their people. One recalls in particular the advocacy of such notable men as Temple Gairdner of Cairo for the revision of the Arabic Bible and of the work of Garland some twenty years ago on the Persian Bible. Yet the work both of these men and of many others who have shared their views has not yet been brought to fruition in terms of a definitive revision of the Arabic and Persian Scriptures. Not the least of the problems arises from the fact that many people within the Church are profoundly influenced by the Islamic attitude to the nature of Scripture and in particular to Islamic belief in a literally inspired text. To the uninformed Christian, the mere idea of revision of the Christian Scriptures seems to be dangerous for it suggests to the Muslim critic that Christians are peculiarly vulnerable at a point where he is especially strong. Christians, however, do not believe in a verbally inspired and "given" text and the Church has never held this view. Even to lend colour to the idea by withholding from the Christian Church in Muslim areas any new light that comes from the study of the scholar is, in effect, to weaken our

whole position and not to strengthen it in our attempt to present the Gospel to the Muslim.

So it is with pleasure and some relief that we are now able to reproduce a series of articles prepared by Professor John A. Thompson setting forth the history of Arabic versions from the earliest times. These articles show forth very clearly how Arabic versions, like all other ancient versions, have been subjected to all the hazards of the transmission of the text, marginal glosses, the ignorance of scribes and the variety of the sources. It is hoped that Church leaders and all who are in a position to influence Christian opinion in the Arab world will find in this material a great deal of information that will help in dispelling false notions and preparing the way for that more adequate revision of the Arabic Scriptures that has been so long a major *desideratum*. Perusal of the whole of Professor Thompson's article on the Arabic Bible leads to the belief that not only a thorough acquaintance with the problems of textual criticism, but a full knowledge of the history of versions is a very desirable part of the equipment of any would be reviser or translator.

W. J. Bradnock

Translations Secretary of the B.F.B.S.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to study the motives and men which produced the major printed Arabic Bibles, to analyze the basic texts and methods used, and finally to evaluate the completed translations. Four printed Arabic Bibles will be considered: (1) the Arabic version in the Paris Polyglot of 1645 and in the London Polyglot of 1657; (2) the Propaganda Version published in Rome in 1671; (3) the Smith-Van Dyck Version published in Beirut in 1865; and finally (4) the Jesuit Version completed in 1880 also in Beirut. Two other printed Arabic Bibles are not here treated: (1) the very literal translation by Faris al-Shidyak, published in London by the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1857, which was soon succeeded by the Smith-Van Dyck Version for Protestants; (2) the translation by the Dominicans of Mosul, 1875-1878, which has been overshadowed by the Jesuit Version among Catholics.

The importance of the study of the Arabic versions of the Bible is evident from several standpoints. The value of the early Arabic versions for textual criticism is being increasingly recognized, especially in connection with some of the other versions like the LXX, the Peshitta, the Coptic, and the Ethiopic. Some of the Arabic translations are landmarks in the history of interpretation, for example that of Saadia Gaon. The story of the Arabic translations of the Bible is also vitally connected with the history of the Church in the Near East. The language in these translations is of interest to the Arabic philologist, whether it deviates from the classical in the earlier editions or conforms to standard literary Arabic in the later translations. Furthermore, a survey of these Arabic Bibles shows their inter-relationship and the translation traditions which have influenced the Arabic Bibles now in common use. Finally, it is hoped that such a survey will be helpful in deriving principles which should guide possible future revisions of the Arabic Bible.

Some of the most helpful general surveys of the Arabic Versions of the Bible are the following: H. Hyvernât, 'Arabes, Versions des Écritures', in *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, ed. F. Vigoroux, Vol. I, Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1891, cols. 845-856; Eb. Nestle, 'Arabische Bibelübersetzungen', in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, ed. J. J. Herzog, Albert Hauck, Vol. III, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1897, pp. 90-95; F. C. Burkitt, 'Arabic Versions', in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. J. Hastings, Vol. I, New York: Scribners, 1903, pp. 136-138; A. Baumstark, 'Arabische Bibelübersetzungen', in *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*, Zweite Auflage, Vol. II, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1931, cols. 317-319; Jamil Hannā Trānjān, *Al-kitāb al-muqaddas fī al-lughah al-'arabīyah*, Cairo: Nile Mission Press, 1936; and especially the great work of Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, V Vols. (*Studi e testi*, 118, 133, 146, 147, 172), Citta del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, 1944-1953 (hereafter referred to as Graf). Details on the Arabic versions are found in two publications by the British and by the American Bible Societies: T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, Vol. II, London: The Bible House, 1911; and

Eric M. North ed., *The Book of a Thousand Tongues* (in which the Arabic Versions were treated by Dr. J. Oscar Boyd), New York: American Bible Society, 1938. A recent survey of studies of the Arabic versions of the New Testament is given by B. M. Metzger in *New Testament Manuscript Studies*, edited by M. P. Parvis and A. P. Wikgren, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950, pp. 47-49. In *The Arabic Manuscripts of Mount Sinai*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1955, Dr. A. S. Atiya describes one of the most important collections of early Arabic Biblical manuscripts, which were the forerunners of the modern editions here studied.

John A. Thompson.

I

The Arabic Version in the Paris and London Polyglots

A. The Arabic Version in the Paris Polyglot. Title: *Biblia 1. Hebraica 2. Samaritana 3. Chaldaica 4. Graeca 5. Syriaca 6. Latina 7. Arabica* [Guy Michel le Jay, IX Tomes in X Vols.], Paris: Antonius Vitré, [1629-] 1645.

1. Origin

The Renaissance brought not only a revival of interest in Greek and Latin classics, but also in Near Eastern languages, such as Hebrew, Aramaic, and later Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic. The growing study of these languages threw new light on the text and meaning of the Bible. The results of such linguistic and Biblical studies were collected in the great Polyglots, the first two of which were the Complutensian Polyglot, published in Spain 1513-1517, and the Antwerp Polyglot (1569-1572), dedicated to Philip II of Spain.

Not to be outdone by its neighbours in the new learning, France, during the reign of Louis XIV, the Great, also produced a Polyglot Bible, the first to contain an Arabic Version. Cardinal du Perron urged the undertaking of a French Polyglot in 1615, but he died in 1617. Another encourager of the work and of the inclusion of Arabic was Jacob August de Thou, the Librarian of the Royal Library in Paris. Francis Savary de Brèves, the French ambassador to Turkey, secured from Egypt the Arabic manuscript used as the basis for the Old Testament, the Arabic type from Constantinople, and even two of the chief workers on the Arabic text, Gabriel Sionita and Johannes Hesronita.

Without these Maronites this first printing of an Arabic Bible would not have been possible. Since they came from Lebanon, Arabic was their native tongue. Since the Maronites had united with the Roman church in the 16th century, and since these men had studied in the Maronite College in Rome, they also knew Latin, the language of Western learning. Johannes Hesronita (*Yūḥannā ibn Kyriakus al-Ḥaṣrūnī*)¹ produced the Latin translation of the Arabic Pentateuch. The chief worker on the Arabic as well as on the Syriac versions was Gabriel Sionita (*Jibrā'il al-Ṣahyūnī al-Ḥadānī*)² who was finally responsible for all the Arabic text and its vocalization (except for Ruth and II (actually V) Maccabees) and for the Latin translation of the Arabic, (except for the Pentateuch and Ruth). His disputes over payment with the editor, Guy Michel le Jay, delayed for some years the completion of the undertaking. Cardinal Richelieu, who was interested in the work, finally gave an order imprisoning Sionita in 1640 for three months, until the latter signed an agreement that he would labor faithfully in completing his assignments for the Polyglot. In the same year another Maronite scholar was imported from the Maronite College in Rome to speed the work, Abraham Ecchel-

¹ Graf, II, pp. 350-351.

² Graf, II, 351-353; J. P. Arendzen, 'Gabriel Sionita' in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. C. G. Herbermann, Vol. VI, New York, Appleton, 1909, p. 331.

lensis (*Ibrāhīm al-Hāqilānī*, 1605-1664).³ Ecchellensis produced the Arabic and its Latin translation for Ruth and also the Arabic of II (actually V) Maccabees. His other scholarly achievements included assistance in the Propaganda Version finally published in 1671 and the translation of many Arabic and Syriac Christian works into Latin. Disputes between him and Sionita restrained the latter from publishing any full account of the editing of this Arabic Bible.

In spite of these hindrances the 10th volume of the Paris Polyglot was finally printed in 1645, seventeen years after the first volume appeared in 1629. The hope of Cardinal Richelieu that he would be acknowledged as sponsor was denied by his death in 1642. In the first volume after the dedication to Louis XIV appears the name of Richelieu's successor, Cardinal Mazarin, as protector of the project, and Mazarin's portrait is on the opposite page.⁴

2. *Nature of the Arabic Version in the Paris Polyglot*

(a) Format

In the Paris Polyglot the Arabic Version with its Latin translation of the New Testament is found in Tome V, Pars 1 (1630), Pars 2 (1633), and of the Old Testament in Tome VI (1632) Pentateuch, Tome VII (1642) Joshua - II Chronicles, Tome VIII (1635) Ezra - Ecclesiasticus, Tome IX (1645) Isaiah - Maccabees. The books follow the order of the Latin Vulgate, but five are lacking in this Arabic Version: Tobit, Judith, Esther, I and II Maccabees. What is called II Maccabees in this edition is the work now sometimes numbered V Maccabees, an Arabic abridgment of the history of Joseph ben Gorion. By oversight Ezekiel 24: 6-27 was omitted in the Paris Polyglot. The other omissions in the prophets charged by Brian Walton against the Paris Polyglot are not the fault of the editors, but result from following manuscripts based on the LXX, which is shorter, especially in Jeremiah, than the Masoretic Hebrew text. The printing of the Arabic was done with reasonable care. Only four misprints were found by Professor H. S. Gehman in the Arabic text of Daniel.⁵

(b) Basic Texts and Qualities of Translation

The Arabic Old Testament of the Paris Polyglot follows rather closely Paris arab. 1 which was secured by Francis Savary de Brèves in Cairo in 1606. This MS. was copied in 1584-5 and is said by Brian Walton⁶ to go back to an exemplar about three hundred years before Sionita's time. Sionita used other manuscripts also and made some arbitrary revisions.

³ Graf, II, pp. 354-359; A. J. Maas, 'Abraham Ecchellensis'. in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. C. G. Herbermann, Vol. I, New York, Appleton, 1907, p. 57.

⁴ On the editing of the Paris Polyglot, see Jacob Le Long, C. F. Boerner, A. G. Masch, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Pars I, Halae: J. J. Gebauer, 1778, pp 349-373; Graf, I, pp. 93-95.

⁵ 'The Polyglot Arabic Text of Daniel and Its Affinities', in *The Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLIV (1925) : 333.

⁶ London Polyglot, I, p. 96.

The Pentateuch in Paris arab. 1 and so in the Paris Polyglot is the famous translation of Saadia Gaon from the Hebrew. Saadia (*Sa'id ibn Yūsuf al-Faiyūmī*) was born in the Faiyum in Egypt about 892 and died as head of the Jewish school at Sura in Iraq in 942. He is acknowledged to be the founder of the Jewish philological and exegetical learning of the Middle Ages. His translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Arabic (not all of which has survived) has been compared in influence with the LXX and with Mendelssohn's German translation in the 18th century. It still remains the standard Arabic translation for Arabic-speaking Jews. In his preface to his version of the Pentateuch, Saadia says that he made the translation because some Arabic-speaking Jews asked him to do so in order that they might understand the Torah. He frankly calls his work a *tafsīr*, 'interpretation', according to reason and tradition. Saadia himself admits that he has added words and letters where necessary to make the meaning clear.⁷ Many differences between Saadia's Pentateuch in the Polyglots and in the Constantinople edition of 1546 have been listed by Edward Pococke in Vol. VI of the London Polyglot. The edition of Derenbourg, following a Yemenite manuscript, shows still other variants.

The principles of translation followed by Saadia will appear in the following examples. (1) The elimination of anthropomorphisms, in which he went further than the LXX and Targum: Genesis 8 : 21, Hebrew, "And Yahweh smelled the rest-giving smell"; Saadia, "And God received the pleasing offering" (so Targum). Genesis 12 : 7, Hebrew, "And Yahweh appeared to Abram"; Saadia, "Then the angel of God appeared to him". Genesis 18 : 13, Hebrew, "And Yahweh said to Abraham"; Saadia, "And the prophet of God said to Abraham". Exodus 33 : 23, Hebrew, "And I shall remove my hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts, but my face shall not be seen"; Saadia, "Then I shall remove my cloud so that you may see the back-parts of my angel, and his face is not seen".

(2) Explanatory insertions: Genesis 3 : 20, Hebrew, "Mother of all living [beings]"; Saadia, "Mother of all rational living [beings]". Genesis 5 : 22, Hebrew, "And Enoch walked with God"; Saadia, "And Enoch walked in obedience to God".

(3) Identification of Hebrew proper names with quite different contemporary names of peoples and places: Genesis 10 : 2, Hebrew, "Gomer"; Saadia, "Turks". Hebrew, "Tubal"; Saadia, "Chinese". Hebrew, "Tiras"; Saadia, "Persians". Genesis 10 : 3, Hebrew, "Ashkenaz"; Saadia, "Slavs". Hebrew, "Riphath"; Saadia, "France". In Genesis 10 : 13, 14, Saadia's Egyptian origin is apparent: Genesis 10 : 13, Hebrew, "Ludim"; Saadia, "Tanisians" [of a city in the Delta]. Hebrew, "Anamim"; Saadia, "Alexandrians". Hebrew, "Lehabim"; Saadia, "Bahnasans" [of a town in Middle Egypt]. Genesis 10 : 14, Hebrew, "Casluhim"; Saadia, "Sa'idis" [or "Upper Egyptians"]. Hebrew, "Caphtorim"; Saadia, "Damiettans" [of a city in the Delta].

(4) Hebrew idioms are often not translated literally, but interpreted:

⁷ J. Derenbourg, *Oeuvres complètes de R. Saadia ben Josef al-Fayyumi*, Vol. I, *Version Arabe du Pentateuque*, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1893, p. 4.

Genesis 2 : 17, Hebrew, "A dying thou shalt die"; Saadia, "Thou shalt be worthy to die". Exodus 20 : 7, Hebrew, "Thou shalt not lift up the name of Yahweh thy God for vanity"; Saadia, "Do not swear in the name of God thy Lord vainly" (so Targum).

(5) Hebrew words are sometimes translated by similar sounding Arabic words, a principle sometimes used by Aquila also. Genesis 3 : 18, Hebrew, *dardar*, "thistles"; Saadia, *dardar* (an uncommon Arabic word, noted by Dozy only in the Arabic Bible; the word *dardār* (with an *alif*) means 'elm tree', or 'thistles').⁸

The Arabic book of Joshua in the Paris Polyglot was also translated from the Hebrew. This translation, however, was not by Saadia, for it lacks some of his characteristic methods and phrases.

Most of the Arabic historical books in the Polyglots were studied by the German Semitist, Emil Roediger, for his doctoral dissertation, which was expanded and published in 1829.⁹ Roediger proved conclusively that most of these books were translated from the Syriac Peshitta (Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I Kings 1-11, II Kings 12 : 17-25: 30, I and II Chronicles), and that at least one section is from the Hebrew (I Kings 12 : 1-II Kings 12 : 16). See below on Roediger's theory about Nehemiah.

From the Syriac origin, the Arabic vocabulary, and forms of the proper names Roediger deduces that the books from Judges through I Kings 11 were translated by a Christian in the 13th or 14th centuries. This translator occasionally made additions to the Syriac for greater clarity, e.g. in I Samuel 6 : 3, to "empty" he adds "without a gift". An addition so long that one suspects a text different from the standard Peshitta is found in Judges 11 : 22, "And again the king of the children of Ammon sent messengers to Jephthah demanding from him the land which the children of Israel had taken from them, and Jephthah sent, saying". Omissions are comparatively rare; e.g. Judges 3 : 6 is abbreviated, and Judges 8 : 31 is lacking. This translator often correctly interprets Syriac idioms; e.g. Judges 3 : 10, Syriac, "And the hand of the Lord was on him", Arabic, "And the Lord helped him". Occasionally the Syriac is misunderstood; e.g. II Samuel 18 : 29, Syriac, "army", Arabic "horses" (which has the same root consonants, *khyl*).

Several features point to a Jewish translator from the Hebrew in I Kings 12 - II Kings 12 : 16. In I Kings 14 : 21, Hebrew, "His name", becomes in Arabic, *sakīnatahu* (from the Hebrew *shekhināh*), "His presence". In I Kings 12 : 24, instead of the Hebrew, "heard", the translator follows the Targum, "received". Additions are few; e.g. II Kings 3 : 27, "And after they had attained what they wanted". Omissions are also rare; e.g. I Kings 15 : 18 omits "of the houses of Yahweh and" (perhaps to protect the reputation of good king Asa?). Because the translator uses the correct Arabic names for Abanah and Pharpar in II Kings 5 : 12,

⁸ For bibliography on Saadia's translation, see Henry Malter, *Saadia Gaon, His Life and Work*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1921, pp. 141-146. Some of the above examples of Saadia's methods were first pointed out to the writer by Dr. E. E. Elder, formerly of Cairo.

⁹ Aemilius Roediger, *De origine et indole arabicae librorum V. T. historicorum interpretationis*. Libri duo. Halis Saxonum: Kuemmel, 1829.

Roediger deduces that this Jew was from Damascus or the vicinity, but this is not a necessary conclusion.

The translator of II Kings 12: 17-25: 30 from the Syriac, according to Roediger, was a Christian of perhaps the 14th century. This translator follows the Syriac quite closely. Among the additions is the clause in II Kings 25 : 7, "And imprisoned him in the house of punishments until his death". An example of misinterpretation is found in II Kings 13 : 17 where the proper name "Aphek" becomes in Arabic, "extremes of their land". Sometimes this section preserves better readings than the Polyglot Syriac; e.g. in II Kings 19 : 37 the Syriac reads 'Ardōṭ, while the Arabic reads the correct 'Ararāt.

Since the books of Chronicles have similar characteristics to those of the above section, Roediger suggests that these books may be the work of the same translator.

That Arabic Ezra is from the LXX has most recently been demonstrated by Wilhelm Rudolph.¹⁰ Note in 7 : 25, Arabic "secretaries", following the LXX, for Hebrew, "judges", and the insertion of the name "Sattu" (with Codex Alexandrinus) before Shecaniah in 8 : 5.

Roediger's somewhat complex theory about Nehemiah has not been followed by all later investigators. Roediger held that Nehemiah 1 : 1-9 : 27 had been originally translated by a Jew from the Hebrew and then revised by a Christian from the Syriac, and that Nehemiah 9 : 28-13 : 31 was translated by a Christian from the Syriac. Wilhelm Rudolph¹¹ gives a simpler explanation which accounts for the phenomena in Nehemiah, namely, that all of Nehemiah was translated basically from the Syriac, and that the translator made occasional use of both LXX and Hebrew texts.

Job in the Polyglots is based on the Syriac Peshitta version. For example, Job 1 : 13 omits "wine" with the Peshitta, and 6 : 20 reads "they trusted" (with Peshitta), instead of the Hebrew, "he trusted".

The other poetical and wisdom books in the Polyglots are translated from the LXX. For example, Proverbs 6 : 8 has the Septuagint's long addition on the bee. Psalms is from a mixed text, but is basically of the family of Codex Alexandrinus. Psalm 14 (Arabic 13): 1 has this codex's addition at the end, "and not one".

A fascinating chapter in the study of the Arabic Bible is the advancement in knowledge of the basic text and even of the translator of the Arabic version of the prophets in the Paris Polyglot. In 1886, C. H. Cornill¹² demonstrated inductively that Ezekiel was translated from an uncial Greek manuscripts, without accents, breathings, or word divisions. On the basis of thorough collation, Cornill also proved that this basic Greek manuscript was closely related to Codex Alexandrinus (A), but preserved a purer form of the Egyptian recension of the Septuagint than A. In 1925, H. S. Gehman reached similar conclusions regarding the Arabic version of Daniel.¹³ In a dissertation on the Egyptian Arabic

¹⁰ *Esra und Nehemia, samt 3. Esra (Handbuch zum Alten Testament, Erste Reihe, 20)*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949, p. XXI.

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹² *Das Buch Ezechiel*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1886, p. 51. ¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 333.

versions of the Pentateuch, J. F. Rhode made the plausible suggestion that the earliest Egyptian Arabic translations came from the orthodox Melchites, who would be less reluctant than the Copts to adopt Arabic for religious use.¹⁴ This proposal would also explain why the earliest Egyptian Arabic Bible translations are from the Greek with little Coptic influence.

Several manuscripts of this Egyptian Melchite version of the prophets have colophons describing the translator as a priest of Alexandria and referring to the basic text. The correct interpretation of these colophons has been given by Father Alberto Vaccari of Rome in 1921 after a study of manuscripts in Rome, Paris, and London.¹⁵ The Arabic word *al-'alam* in these colophons had previously been interpreted by Eichhorn and Ryssel as an epithet, "the learned", or emended by Roediger to *al-mu'allim*, "the teacher". Vaccari showed that this is the name of the priest who produced the translation, *al-'Alam* (an abbreviation for *'Alam al-dīn*). Moreover Vaccari proved that the Arabic word *lytn* describing the language from which the translation was made does not mean "Latin" (De Slane) nor is it an error for *lisān*, "language", (Eichhorn) but is the equivalent of Greek *liton*, meaning "uncial". Furthermore this uncial manuscript was written on *raq*, "fine parchment", which ceased to be used in mediaeval times. This basic Greek manuscript, concluded Vaccari, must not be later than the 5th or 6th centuries. Vaccari dated *Al-'Alam* in about the 10th century, the period previously suggested by W. Gesenius. This dating of the translation is more cautious than that of Löfgren, who thinks the 9th or even the 8th centuries possible.¹⁶

This Arabic version of the prophets in the Paris Polyglot is of critical importance because it represents a form of the Septuagint which is freer of hexaplaric influence than Greek A. In addition to stressing its critical importance, H. S. Gehman¹⁷ praises the quality of the translation itself, calling it literal but good.

As pointed out above, the Arabic version in the Paris Polyglot lacks the usual I and II Maccabees. The Arabic book of Maccabees there printed and called II Maccabees is now sometimes numbered V Maccabees. This Arabic Maccabees is an abbreviation of the history of Joseph ben Gorion. The text in the Paris Polyglot seems to follow Vat. arab. 468, which was the chief basis for the Old Testament in the Propaganda Version of 1671. It is possible that Abraham Ecchellensis copied this book from this MS. in Rome and brought the copy to Paris, since he is known to have worked on the Arabic version of this book for the Paris Polyglot.

The basic texts of the Arabic New Testament in the Paris Polyglot are not quite so varied as those from the Old Testament. In the gospels the Paris Polyglot follows in general the Arabic edition of the gospels printed by Giovanni Battista Raimundi in Rome, 1590-1591. This latter

¹⁴ *The Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch in the Church of Egypt*. Leipzig: W. Druglin, [1921 ?], p. 21.

¹⁵ 'Le versioni arabe dei profeti', in *Biblica* II (1921): 401-423.

¹⁶ Oscar Löfgren, *Studien zu den arabischen Danielübersetzungen* (Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1936 : 4). Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1936, p. 35.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 334-344.

edition was based on Vat. copt. 9, which has the Coptic (Bohairic) text with an accompanying Arabic version. This Arabic version in this manuscript is based on the Bohairic Coptic, but with additions from both Greek and Syriac sources. This eclectic recension, sometimes called the Egyptian Vulgate, is as old as the 10th century, and it became generally used by the 13th not only in Egypt but in Syria also.

Outside the gospels the chief source used by Sionita for the Arabic New Testament was an Arabic manuscript brought from Aleppo by Father Joseph, a Carmelite. In the Acts and Epistles the readings of the Arabic in the Paris Polyglot often agree with the Koine text. For example, Acts 20 : 28 reads "Lord God", a typical conflate reading of the Koine, while ACD read "Lord" and B and Sinaiticus read "God".

Georg Graf has made a special study of the early Arabic translations of the Apocalypse, or Revelation.¹⁸ He finds that the Polyglot edition of this book was translated from a Greek basis but with some additions from the Peshitta. An example of interpretative translation occurs in 1 : 7: "every eye" of Greek and Syriac becomes in Arabic "all possessors of eye". Graf suggests that some glosses or paraphrases are from the occasionally arbitrary and inexact work of Sionita.

B. The London Polyglot. Title: *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta Complectentia Textus Originales Hebraicum, cum Pentateucho Samaritino, Chaldaicum, Graecum. Versionumque Antiquarum Samaritanae, Graecae LXXII Interp., Chaldaicae, Syriacae, Arabicae, Aethiopicae, Persicae, Vulg. Lat. Quicquid comparari poterat. Cum Textuum & Versionum Orientalium Translationibus Latinis*. [ed. Brian Walton. VI Vols.] London: Thomas Rycroft, [1654-]1657.

1. Origin

A combination of factors made possible the London Polyglot, the most comprehensive and useful of the four great polyglots. No doubt the fact that polyglots had already appeared under Catholic auspices in Spain, the Low Countries, and France was one incentive to the production of a polyglot in Protestant England also. In the mid-16th century England had several great Semitic scholars, e.g. John Selden, Edward Pococke, and John Lightfoot, who gave encouragement or aid to the undertaking. Most of all, the London Polyglot had a skilful and energetic promoter in Bishop Brian Walton. Walton studied Semitic languages at Oxford. His plan for a new polyglot, which was circulated in 1652, was approved by John Selden and Archbishop Ussher. This was one of the first large publishing ventures financed chiefly by advance subscriptions. Between 1654 and 1657 the six folio volumes were printed. Walton's promotional and scholarly achievement is the more remarkable in that he was a royalist and was deprived of his ecclesiastical livings during the Commonwealth (1649-1660). The copies published during this period acknowledged the help of Cromwell's government in permitting the import of paper duty-free. Copies printed after 1660 are dedicated to Charles II.

¹⁸ 'Arabische Übersetzungen der Apocalypse', in *Biblica* X (1929): 170-194.

With Walton were associated a group of learned editors. The versatile Walton himself wrote the introductions, including one on the Arabic language and the Arabic Versions of Scripture (Vol. I, pp. 93-97). Those who assisted him with the editing of the Arabic included Edward Pococke, who revised the Latin translations of the Arabic and also supplied an appendix in Vol. VI collating Saadia's version of the Pentateuch in the Polyglots with the Constantinople edition of 1546 and with other manuscripts. Others who worked on the Arabic were Edmund Castell, whose lexicons were later published in a form similar to the Polyglot, and also Thomas Hyde, who was later Professor of Arabic and then of Hebrew at Oxford.¹⁹

2. *Nature of the Arabic Version in the London Polyglot*

(a) Format

The arrangement of the London Polyglot is much more convenient for comparative purposes than that of the Paris Polyglot, for the versions are on the same or the facing page. The order of books is similar to that in the King James Version. Vol. I contains prolegomena and the Pentateuch. Vol. II Joshua - Esther, (Esther not in Arabic), Vol. III Job - Malachi, Vol. IV Apocrypha: Prayer of Manasses (not in Arabic), III Esdras (in English I Esdras, not in Arabic), Tobit (not in Arabic), Judith (not in Arabic), Apocryphal additions to Esther (not in Arabic), Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Epistle of Baruch (not in Arabic), Baruch, Apocryphal additions to Daniel, I and II Maccabees (not in Arabic), Arabic 'II' Maccabees (now numbered V), Vol. V New Testament, Vol. VI Appendix.

(b) Text

The text of the Arabic version of the London Polyglot is almost a transcript of the Paris Polyglot with some additions in the prophets. H. S. Gehman collated Daniel (omitting the apocryphal additions) in the two Polyglots and found that London copies Paris faithfully, including its four misprints and adding one more. One long addition in London supplied the Arabic for Ezekiel 24 : 6-27, which had been omitted by oversight in the Paris edition. The other additions in the prophets are simply to supply Arabic equivalents for Hebrew material not found in the LXX, which was the basis for the version of the prophets in Paris arab. 1, which in turn was the chief source for the Old Testament in the Paris Polyglot. The source of these additions was chiefly Bodl. arab. christ. Uri 6.²⁰

¹⁹ On the editing of the London Polyglot see Graf, I, pp. 94, 95; Le Long *op. cit.* Pars I, pp. 374-383; D. S. Margoliouth, 'Walton, Brian or Bryan', in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. L. Stephen and S. Lee, Vol. XX. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921-1922, pp. 725-728.

²⁰ Vaccari, *op. cit.* p. 402, lists London's additions as follows: Is. 2 : 22; 23 : 13; 38 : 15; 44 : 2; 65 : 13. Jer. 7 : 1; 8 : 10-12; 10 : 6-8; 11 : 7, 8; 17 : 1-4; 25 : 7, 13; 26 : 26 in order of the LXX and so in following Jer. references; 28 : 45-48; 31 : 45-47; 32 : 14; 34 : 1, 7, 13, 14, 19; 35 : 5; 36 : 14, 16-20; 37 : 10, 11; 40 : 14-26; 46 : 4-13; 52 : 2, 3, 28-30. Lam. 3 : 22-24, 29, 55-57. Ezek. 11 : 12; 13 : 4; 24 : 6-27; 27 : 32; 42 : 17, 19.

(c) Qualities and Translator of Additions in London Polyglot.

The nature and author of the Arabic translation in the last-named manuscript have been most fully studied by Alberto Vaccari.²¹ This translation was based on the Peshitta, but also has elements from the Hebrew and the LXX in addition to paraphrases and additions by the translator. The colophons of this and other related manuscripts give the name of the translator as *Fathyūn ibn Aiyūb*. This is evidently Pethion, a Syrian Christian scholar who lived in Baghdad in the middle of the 9th century. This was the era of *Harūn al-Rashīd* and the height of the period of translations from the Syriac into Arabic. The author of the *Fihrist* calls him "the truest of the translators in translating, and the best of them in interpretation".

3. *Evaluation of the Polyglot Arabic Bible*

This Arabic version was intended for scholarly use, as indicated by the size, cost, and polyglot nature of the Paris and London editions. It is this Arabic version which is referred to in the notes of Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* and in Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece*. This Arabic edition is of critical importance especially in connection with other versions, notably in the prophets as indicated above. In using the Polyglot Arabic Bible one must always remember the diverse nature of the basic texts.

At least one attempt was made to adapt the Polyglot Arabic Version to popular use, the Arabic Bible printed in 1811 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This Bible was edited by Joseph Dacre Carlyle, Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, and after his death completed by Henry Ford, Professor of Arabic at Oxford. The apocryphal books of the London Polyglot were omitted, and Esther was added from the Propaganda edition of 1671. Few changes were made from the text of the London Polyglot. Vowel marks, verse numbers, and page numbers are all lacking.

²¹ 'Le versioni arabe dei Profeti II' in *Biblica* III (1922): 401-423.

II

The Propaganda Version

Title: *Biblia Sacra Arabica sacrae congregationis de propaganda fide iussu edita ad usum ecclesiarum orientalium: additis e regione Bibliis Latinis Vulgatis*. 3 vols. Rome: Typis eiusdem Sacrae Congregat. de Propaganda Fide, 1671.

A. Origin of the Propaganda Version

Several influences led to the publishing of a new Arabic Bible by the Roman Catholic Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in Rome. Certainly one influence was the final union of the Arabic-speaking Maronites with the Roman Church in the 16th century, and the establishment of a Maronite College in Rome strengthened this relationship. A new Arabic Bible was needed to replace the variety of translations used by the Maronites with a uniform and complete version conforming to the Latin Vulgate. This contact with the Maronites showed the need for missionary propaganda in the Near East, in which a printed Bible would be a great aid. Gregory XIII (Pope 1572-1585) urged the project and the procuring of Arabic Biblical manuscripts in preparation for such an edition. The proposal in 1622 in the Congregation to carry out the editing of an Arabic Bible was in part stimulated by the publication of the Dutch Protestant scholar, Thomas Erpenius, of an Arabic New Testament in 1616 and an Arabic Pentateuch in 1622.

In 1622 the Papal Nuncio appointed four men to take up preparations for an Arabic Bible. The chairman of the committee was Sergius Risius (*Sarkīs ibn Mūsā al-Ruzzī*), Maronite Archbishop of Damascus. Risius came of a leading church family in Syria and had studied in Rome. He was in charge of the work till his death in 1638. With his own hand he copied most of one of the MSS. used for this Bible, Casantense arab. carsh. 2 (no. 2108). Another Maronite member was Victorinus Scialac Accurensis (*Nasrallah Shalaq al-'Aqūrī*), who taught Arabic and Syriac in Rome and helped to bring out an Arabic Psalter in Rome in 1614. He died in 1635. Father Hilarion Rancati, a Cistercian, was later Abbot General of that order. A Franciscan, Thomas Obicini de Novara, had been a missionary in Syria and the Custodian of the Holy Land. It was he who submitted the plan for the Bible to the Congregatio in 1622.

Others who worked on the project included Filippo Guadagnoli, who had chief responsibility after the death of Risius in 1638 until his own death in 1656. In 1630 Father Thomas was succeeded by his student, Father Dominicus Germanus de Silesia. Abraham Ecchellensis (*Ibrāhīm al-Ḥāqilānī*) assisted at various times till his death in 1664. As indicated above, he also had a part in editing the Arabic Bible in the Paris Polyglot. Another Maronite who aided in the Propaganda Version was Johannes Leopardus Esronite (*Yūḥannā Nimrūnī al-Ḥaṣrūnī*), who died in 1632. A Capuchin, Father Brice, worked as a corrector. Louis Maracci also aided in the final editing. His most famous work is an analysis of the Koran.

The policy followed in this translation varied considerably, partly because of the death of many of the editors during the fifty years, 1622-1671. The commission to the original committee in 1622 was to "revise Arabic

codices, purging them from errors, especially if they recognized heresy, so that afterwards their printing might be considered". In 1624 the Congregatio decided it was better to translate the Vulgate anew into Arabic, keeping the old translations which agreed with the Vulgate. In 1628 the principle was adopted of following the Vulgate as far as Arabic idiom permitted, and to use the Hebrew when the Latin idiom did not suit the Arabic. In 1643 a further revision in principle was adopted: to follow the Vulgate closely from the end of Ezekiel onwards.

The deaths of collaborators and changes in policies delayed the completion of the work. In 1632 Risius began the printing of Genesis, and the Pentateuch was completed in 1635. The Old Testament was finished in 1647 and the New in 1649. But the product was unsatisfactory, for there were many errors, and some felt that the translation did not follow the Vulgate closely enough. Therefore this early form was withdrawn and the revised work appeared in 1671.²²

B. Nature of the Propaganda Version

1. Format

This Bible was published in three folio volumes. The books follow the Vulgate order. The contents of the volumes are as follows: I Preface, Corrigenda, Pentateuch, Joshua - II Chronicles; II Corrigenda, Ezra - II Maccabees; III Corrigenda, New Testament, Citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, Interpretation of Heb., Chald., and Greek proper names in the Bible, Alphabetical Index to the contents of the Bible. The Arabic text is printed without vowels in the outer column of each page. The Latin parallel inner column is not a translation of the Arabic, but simply the Vulgate.

2. Texts Followed.

As shown above, as this work progressed there was a tendency to follow the Vulgate more and more closely. In a sample Old Testament chapter, Ruth 1 : 1-22, at least twenty-four words and phrases show Vulgate influence. In a New Testament chapter, Ephesians 1 : 1-23, the Vulgate basis appears clearly in ten words and phrases. I John 5 : 7 and 8 have the doctrinal additions rarely found outside the Vulgate.

In accordance with the first policy, some Arabic manuscripts were used in the Propaganda Version. The most important of these for the Old Testament was Vat. arab. 468, which contains all the Old Testament except for Baruch, for which a space was saved. This MS. was copied in Tripoli, Syria, under the direction of Father Giovanni Battista Eliano, the first Jesuit sent by the Pope to Lebanon. One of his purposes was to secure manuscripts for the proposed Arabic Bible. According to the colophon, at least II Maccabees in this MS. was copied from a MS. written in Damascus in 1238, which in turn was copied from a MS. written in Antioch in 1021.²³

²² A full account of the origin of the Propaganda edition is given by Alberto Vaccari. "Una Bibbia Araba per il primo Gesuita ventuto al Libano in *Melanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth (Grand Liban)*, Tome X (1925): 79-104. See also Graf, I, p. 96, and also his treatments in Vols. III and IV of the individual collaborators.

²³ See Graf, I, pp. 89-92, on the controversy whether this colophon refers only to II Maccabees or to the whole Old Testament and on the relationship between Vat. arab. 468 and the similar Leningrad, As. Mus. or. D 226.

Vaccari, who in the work mentioned above gives the fullest treatment of Codex Vat. Arab. 468, thought in the Pentateuch of this MS. the LXX was basic with some Peshitta influence, but Graf points out that more names follow the Syriac than the Greek and that therefore the Peshitta is probably primary. The historical books, Joshua - Nehemiah in this MS. are certainly from the Syriac Peshitta. In Ruth 1 : 1-22, for example, about five words and phrases represent Peshitta readings. Tobit is from The Latin Vulgate, Judith from the LXX, and Esther and Job again from the Peshitta. Psalms in this MS. is the version by *Abū al-Fath' Abdallah ibn al-Fadl ibn 'Abdallah al-Mutrān al-Antākī*.²⁴ This scholar lived in the 11th century, originated from Antioch and held the office of deacon. He claims in an introduction to have made his translation from the Greek, but he probably used previous Arabic translations of the Psalms as well. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus are from the LXX. Most of the prophets are a paraphrastic translation of the Peshitta with some Septuagintal influence. According to Löfgren,²⁵ Daniel may be from the Greek with revision from the Peshitta. II Maccabees is from the Greek.

Another MS. used for the Old Testament of the Propaganda Version is Casanatense arab. carsh. 2 (no. 2108).²⁶ Most of this MS. was copied by Sergius Risius, the first chief editor of the Propaganda edition. This MS. in the Pentateuch is copied from Vat. Arab. 606 (1344 A.D.), which is based on the Peshitta, but revised from the LXX, perhaps in the Coptic version. The historical books are from Vat. Arab. 449 (1336 A.D.) which is from the LXX. The Psalms (not all in Risius's handwriting) were copied from Vat. Syr. 454 (1529 A.D.). According to Baumstark and Graf, this latter MS. was based on the Greek-Arabic tradition, but revised by the Peshitta.

Vaccari²⁷ illustrates the end result of such diverse origins in the final Propaganda text of Genesis 41 : 43. "And he mounted him on his second chariot" is from Vat. arab. 468, from the LXX. "And the crier before him" is from Casan, arab. carsh. 2 (no. 2108), from Vat. arab. 606, from the LXX. "That thou art lord and ruler" is from Vat. arab. 468, from the Peshitta; or from Casan. 2108, from Vat. arab. 606, from the Peshitta. "And they knew that he was ruler" is from the Vulgate. "Over the land of Egypt in its entirety" is common to all these sources in substance, but this wording is that of Vat. arab. 468.

In the New Testament the Propaganda edition follows for the gospels a codex said to have been brought from Cyprus, perhaps to be identified with Borg. syr. 49, of the year 1398. Ignazio Guidi classifies the Propaganda gospels under the heading, "Alexandrine Vulgate of Syrian origin".²⁸ The manuscripts used for Acts and Epistles are not known, but were presumably of Syrian origin. In Ephesians 1 : 1-23 at least four

²⁴ Graf, II, pp. 52-64.

²⁵ *Op. cit.* p. 52.

²⁶ See A. Vaccari, "Un codice carsciunice della Casanatense e la Bibbia araba del 1671", in *Biblica* IV (1923) : 96-107.

²⁷ *Op. cit.* p. 107.

²⁸ *Le traduzioni degli Evangelii in arabo e in etiopico (Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, anno CCLXXXV. 1888. Serie Quarta Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, Vol. IV, Parte 1, Memorie, p. 32.)*

words and phrases indicate Syriac textual origin. Graf found the Apocalypse, or Revelation, to be a translation of the Bohairic Coptic, like that in Erpenius's Arabic New Testament of 1616. Some places in the Propaganda Revelation conform more to the Latin Vulgate.²⁹

C. *Evaluation of the Propaganda Version*

This translation, with all its imperfections, was used by the Catholics for about two hundred years and was also reprinted by Protestants, before the production of the Smith-Van Dyck Version. The original Catholic edition of 1671 in three large and expensive volumes with the Latin Vulgate was hardly adapted for popular use. Protestant reprints, like those of the British and Foreign Bible Society beginning in 1820, omitted the Apocrypha and the Vulgate and were issued in one volume, suitable in size and price for general distribution.

For several reasons the Propaganda Version was unsatisfactory. Because of its diverse textual origin it satisfied neither the Oriental Christians, whose traditional texts had been changed, nor some of the Occidental Catholics, who wanted even greater conformity to the Vulgate.

Furthermore the translators did not always correctly interpret the texts they were ostensibly following. The Arabic preposition *bi* at the beginning of Ephesians 1 : 6 is a mechanical translation of Latin *in* as if the latter governed the ablative, but is not a correct rendering of Latin *in* with the accusative, which is the Vulgate text.

A fault that became more serious with the renaissance of literary Arabic is that the language of the Propaganda Version does not always conform to classical usage. A few of these linguistic solecisms come from literal translation of Latin or Syriac expressions. For example, in Ruth 1 : 13, *lā turīdā*, "do not be willing" (without any object) is a translation of the Latin *nolite*. The frequent use of *bi*, noteworthy in Ephesians 1, where classical usage requires *fī*, is a Syriacism.³⁰

Others of these linguistic features are colloquialisms, which are now offensive in written Arabic. In Ruth 1 : 10 *taṣīrā* is the apocopated form of the verb instead of the indicative.³¹ In Ephesians 1 : 17, *yakūna* is not only unnecessary but contrary to strict rules of syntax.

Sometimes the language, though not grammatically wrong, is awkward. The word-order, for example, in Ruth 1 : 1 and Ephesians 1 : 19 is badly disjointed.

These linguistic short-comings made the Propaganda Version offensive to classicists, especially to Muslims. A Syrian Protestant notes that obscurities and infelicities are especially frequent in the prophets and the Pauline epistles.³² The American Protestant missionaries in Syria were almost ashamed to give this Bible to Muslims and regularly revised the grammar and vocabulary before a public reading of Scripture.³³

²⁹ Georg Graf, "Arabische Uebersetzungen der Apocalypse", in *Biblica* X (1929): 171, 172.

³⁰ G. Graf. *Der Sprachgebrauch der ältesten Christlich-arabischen Literatur*. Leipzig: Otto Harrosowitz, 109, p. 54.

³¹ Graf, *op. cit.*, pp. 31, 32.

³² Jamīl Hanna Trānjān, *Al-kitāb al-muqaddas fī al-lughah al-'arabiyah*. Cairo: Nile Mission Press, 1936, p. 17.

³³ Report of The Syria Mission, 1844, kindly copied by Mr. Clifton Anderson of Beirut.

III

The Smith-Van Dyck Version

Title: *Al-kitāb al-muqaddas ay kutub al-‘ahd al-qadīm wa al-‘ahd al-jadīd, qad turjima ḥadīthan min al-lughah al-‘ibrānīyah wa al-lughah al-yūnānīyah*. Beirut: American Press, 1865.

A. Origin of the Smith-Van Dyck Version

This version might be called a result of the world-wide surge of Protestant missions in the 19th century, which carried missionaries of the American Board to Syria in 1819. One of the impulses to the production of the Smith-Van Dyck Version was the unsatisfactory nature of the Propaganda edition pointed out above. Much of the credit for this version should be attributed to the linguistic ability and industry of the two American editors, Eli Smith and Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck. Their work would not have been possible without the collaboration of Syrian scholars, who were leaders in the renaissance of classical Arabic literature. This literary renaissance was a circumstance which made the revision of the Arabic Bible imperative. The printers, the American Press in Beirut, combined high standards of exactness with close contact with the Arabic-reading public. Another organization which helped to make this Arabic Bible possible was the American Bible Society, which provided funds and also arranged for the electrotyping in New York of plates for a popular edition.

The basis for this new Arabic Bible was laid by Eli Smith, a man equipped by ability and experience for the task. He was born in Northford, Connecticut, in 1801 and graduated from Yale College in 1821 and from Andover Seminary in 1826. He was first sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational) to Malta in 1826, but he transferred to Beirut in 1827. Smith had opportunities for extensive travel throughout the Near East. With Harris Grey Otis Dwight he travelled through parts of Asia Minor, Armenia, Georgia, and Persia, a survey which resulted in the founding of a Protestant mission in Armenia. Most noteworthy were his journeys in 1838 and 1852 with his former professor, Edward Robinson, covering Sinai and Palestine, and parts of Syria. Smith's perfect command of spoken Arabic and intimate knowledge of the people were important factors in Robinson's findings, which are the basis for the modern study of the historical geography of the Holy Land. His linguistic abilities included both ancient and modern languages. He kept in touch with some of the leading German Arabists, especially Professor Emil Roediger of Halle. The Biblical and linguistic library assembled by Smith was of great aid in editing the Arabic Bible. Furthermore Dr. Smith, as head of the American Press in Beirut, had practical knowledge of the problems of Arabic printing. A colleague wrote the following significant comments on Eli Smith: "To him every pursuit was subsidiary to a faithful translation of the Word of God into the Arabic language . . . His idea of perfection was so high

that it was difficult for him ever to be satisfied with his work".³⁴ In 1890, Daniel Coit Gilman, first President of Johns Hopkins University, provided a memorial plaque which is now on the wall of the room where Smith and later Van Dyck worked on the Protestant Arabic Bible.³⁵

Eli Smith was fortunate to have as Syrian associates in the editing of the Arabic Bible two of the leading figures of the Arabic literary renaissance. One of these, *Buṭrus al-Bustānī*, was born of a Maronite family in 1819. At the Patriarchal school of the Monastery of Ain Warka he studied Arabic grammar, Latin, Syriac, and Italian. From the study of the New Testament he was led to Protestant doctrines, and at the age of twenty he fled from the monastery and took refuge with Eli Smith. He became one of the original members of the Beirut Protestant Church and served as an elder for many years, taking part in preaching and in Sunday School teaching. He conducted a flourishing school, and one of his private students was Van Dyck. In addition, he edited several Arabic journals, a daily, a weekly, and a monthly. His literary products included the translation of school books into Arabic. His two greatest works, in addition to his aid on the Arabic Bible, were *Muḥīṭ al-muḥīṭ*, an Arabic dictionary in 2 vols., Beirut, 1867-1870, and *Dā'irat al-ma'ārif*, an Arabic encyclopedia, of which 6 vols. appeared, beginning in 1876, before his death in 1883.³⁶

Smith's other Syrian collaborator on the Arabic Bible was *Nasīf al-Yāzījī*. He was born in 1800 of a Catholic family. Graf calls him the most respected Arabic Christian writer and scholar of the 19th century. The titles of his works are given in five pages in Graf,³⁷ and cover such subjects as Philology; Essays on Style, Rhetoric, and Poetry; Poems, and Varia. These works prepared the way for the renaissance of Arabic literature in the 19th century. Sheikh Nasīf taught both at the school of his friend, Buṭrus al-Bustānī and at the Syrian Protestant College (now the American University) in Beirut. Among his students was Cornelius Van Dyck.

Some landmarks in the progress of the work under Smith and his associates were as follows. In 1837 the missionaries of the American Board in Syria decided to prepare a new Arabic Version, in "the best modern form of spoken Arabic".³⁸

Eli Smith devoted some time to the preparation of a new font of Arabic type for the projected Bible. This was no mean undertaking, since a complete vowelled font of Arabic type requires about 1,800 pieces, compared with English about 100. Smith collected samples of calligraphy

³⁴ H. H. Jessup. *Fifty-three Years in Syria*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1910, Vol. I, p. 56.

³⁵ In addition to Jessup's work, pp. 51-57, see regarding the chief facts of Smith's life W. F. Albright, "Eli Smith", in *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone, Vol. XVII. New York: Scribner's, 1935, pp. 257-258.

³⁶ On *al-Bustānī* see Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. II, pp. 483-486, and Graf, IV, pp. 326-327.

³⁷ Vol. IV, pp. 319-323.

³⁸ Franklin E. Hoskins, "A Chapter in Bible History. First Font Reference Arabic Bible", three separate pages accompanying the Revised Reference New Testament published in Beirut by the American Press in 1912, p. 1.

from various countries in the Near East and prepared large master copies of the letters and their combinations. With these copies he set off for Germany to have the type made, but his boat was wrecked off the coast of Karamania, and Smith lost all his baggage including the models for the type. He returned to Beirut and reproduced the manuscript copies of the letters. With the technical aid of Homan Hallock, the head printer of the American Press in Beirut, the new font of type was completed in 1843. This font has been admired for its clarity and its conformity to the best Arabic penmanship.

In 1844 Dr. Smith reported to the Syria Mission on the desirability of a new Arabic translation of the Bible, and a committee was appointed to study the matter, including both Smith and Cornelius Van Dyck, then only twenty-six years old. In 1847 the Mission decided to begin the new translation and named Eli Smith to head the undertaking. An appeal for funds was sent to America "to give the Word of God to forty million perishing sinners", ³⁹ to use the words of the Syrian committee headed by Smith.

By 1850 the translation of Genesis was completed and one hundred trial copies were printed. In 1854 Smith submitted to the Mission the Pentateuch and part of the New Testament. By the time of Smith's death from cancer in 1857 he had completed the printing of Genesis and Exodus 1-39, and Matthew 1-16, and he left manuscript translations of the entire New Testament, and of the Pentateuch, Isaiah 1-52, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, and Nahum.

The basic texts followed by Smith were the Hebrew and Aramaic for the Old Testament and the Greek for the New. Other versions both ancient and modern were consulted. For the New Testament Smith made his own revised Greek text, selecting from Tischendorf, Lachmann, Tregelles and Alford. When H. H. Jessup gave his new copy of Alford to Smith, another missionary humorously remarked that the Arabic translation of the Bible had thereby been delayed, for now Smith would revise the whole New Testament again. Since the policy of the American Bible Society was to follow the Textus Receptus, Smith's eclectic New Testament text had to be revised by Van Dyck.

Smith's method was painstaking. Buṭrus al-Bustānī would make the first draft. Smith would then revise the translation by comparison with the original. Finally Sheikh Naṣīf would go over the material, making stylistic changes. The result was printed and copies were sent to other missionaries in Arabic-speaking countries and to some German scholars. Not only the learned were consulted, but common men also were asked to indicate words which were not clear to them. Then Smith went over the returned suggestions and prepared a new copy for the final printing.

One can understand why Van Dyck always insisted that Smith should be given due honour for providing an "invaluable" basis for the completion of the work. ⁴⁰ Eli Smith may be compared to Moses, who established the principles on which to proceed in possessing the Promised

³⁹ Hoskins, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ Isaac Hall, on the basis of a letter from Van Dyck, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* XIII (1889), p. xlvii.

Land, but lived only through the conquest of the lesser portion east of the Jordan.

The one who played the part of Joshua in completing this Arabic Bible was Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck. He was born in Kinderhook, New York, in 1818 and studied medicine in Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1839. In the same year he was appointed as a missionary by the American Board, and he arrived in Beirut in 1840.

Van Dyck was privileged to study Arabic with some of the leading literary figures of Syria: Buṭrus al-Bustānī (who became a life-long friend), Naṣīf al-Yāzījī, and the poet, Yūsuf al-Asīr. A fellow-missionary wrote of Van Dyck's mastery of Arabic as follows: "He soon mastered the best productions of Arabic poetry and literature, and by his wonderful memory could quote from the poetry, proverbs, history, and science of the Arabs in a way which completely fascinated the Syrian people. They said, 'He is one of us'. He had no peer among the foreigners in his knowledge of Arabic language and literature".⁴¹ A Syrian poet told Professor Isaac Hall, "Dr. Van Dyck had Arabic at his tongue's and finger's ends" before he began to translate the Bible.⁴²

Van Dyck's missionary life was amazingly varied. He served as a medical doctor; as a professor in schools, Seminary, College, and Medical School; as final editor of the Arabic Bible; as manager of the American Press; and also as a preacher. While he was in America superintending the electrotyping of the plates for the Arabic Bible, he taught Hebrew at Union Theological Seminary in New York, which offered him a professorship. He declined, saying that he had left his heart in Syria. In 1890 on the Jubilee of his arrival in Beirut, among the gifts to him was a bookcase containing all the Arabic books he had written, numbering twenty-six and covering many sciences as well as fiction and theology. In 1891 the Greek Hospital of St. George in Beirut erected a marble bust in honour of his fifty years of medical service in Syria. The most enduring monument to Cornelius Van Dyck is the Protestant Arabic Bible.⁴³

The chief Syrian collaborator with Van Dyck in the completion of the Protestant Arabic Bible was the Muslim Sheikh, Yūsuf ibn 'Aql al-Asīr al-Husaynī. He was born in Sidon and studied in Damascus and for seven years at the al-Azhar University in Cairo. He held government positions in Beirut and Istanbul. Then he returned to Beirut and taught for many years at the Madrasat al-Hikma of the Maronites. His chief publication was a volume of poems.⁴⁴ Van Dyck preferred a learned Muslim as an assistant because he would have no preconceived idea of

⁴¹ Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 107.

⁴² "The Arabic Bible of Drs. Eli Smith and Cornelius V. A. Van Dyck", in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* XI (1885): p. 285.

⁴³ For further details about Van Dyck see Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. I, pp. 104-111; W. L. Wright, Jr., "Van Dyck, Cornelius Van Alen", in *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone, Vol. XIX, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936, p. 186.

⁴⁴ On Sheikh Yūsuf and his publications see Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, Zweiter Supplementband, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1938, p. 759.

what a Biblical passage ought to mean and also because he would be more exactly acquainted with classical Arabic usage.⁴⁵

After Van Dyck was appointed to take Eli Smith's place as editor of the Arabic Bible in 1857, the work progressed regularly till it was completed in 1865. Van Dyck followed in general the method used by his predecessor. Sometimes he delayed printing in order to receive the criticisms of Roediger of Halle and Fleischer of Leipzig. The revision of the New Testament according to the Textus Receptus was completed in 1860, and it was printed in the same year. The translation of the Old Testament was finished in 1864, and the printing and binding of the Old Testament with the New took place in 1865. A service of thanksgiving was held by Syrians and Americans at the American Press. A Syrian, *Ibrāhīm Sarkīs*, composed an Arabic hymn in honor of the occasion.⁴⁶

Cornelius Van Dyck's work on the Arabic Bible did not stop with 1865. He kept the first completed printed Bible and noted in its margins all the corrections and changes in subsequent printings. In 1866-1867 he was in America superintending the making of electroplates under the sponsorship of the American Bible Society. The British and Foreign Bible Society was furnished a copy of these plates. Since he became a member of the committee in Syria for a new Arabic translation of the Bible in 1844, Dr. Van Dyck could be said to have spent about fifty years on the Arabic Bible by the time of his death in 1895.

The chief changes in this Bible since Van Dyck have been in the Reference editions. Franklin E. Hoskins brought out an edition with revised references in 1916, the Fourth Edition of the First Font Reference Bible. The 1949 printing of the Second Font Reference Bible has a slightly different format.

B. Nature of the Smith-Van Dyck Version

1. Format

The first Reference Bible published in 1865 is a large quarto volume. The Old Testament occupies 1534 pages, and the New 509. Vowel signs are indicated only in occasional cases of possible ambiguity. Words not represented in the original and added for clarity are printed in smaller type, and brackets enclose New Testament passages not in the oldest manuscripts. Variant readings and variant renderings are printed at the bottom of the pages. The chapters are divided into paragraphs, putting this Arabic Bible ahead of the English King James editions of the time. Outlines precede each chapter in smaller print. In many places, especially in the historical books the dates proposed by Archbishop Ussher (17th century) are on the margin.

The octavo edition electroplated in New York in 1867 is still reprinted for popular use. It is a much smaller volume, without references, chapter outlines, or variants, and supplied words are not differentiated. Though this edition has only the Bible text, yet it is completely vowelled, an

⁴⁵ Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

⁴⁶ Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 76.

advantage especially to the common man. The Old Testament in this edition has 1358 pages, and the New 422.

In the Fourth Edition of the First Font Reference Bible of 1916 the references were revised by Franklin E. Hoskins of the American Press in Beirut. Hoskins followed the references used in the English Revision of 1880 and in the American Standard Version of 1901. Parentheses (instead of brackets) are used around what was lacking in the oldest manuscripts. The Old Testament occupies 1068 pages and the New 357.⁴⁷

The 1949 printing of the Second Font Reference Bible has no chapter outlines. The Old Testament has 1062 pages, and the New 358.

2. Texts Used in the Smith-Van Dyck Version

In contradistinction to the Polyglot and Propaganda editions, whose basic texts are bewilderingly heterogeneous, the Smith-Van Dyck Version consistently follows received texts in the original languages. In the Old Testament this is of course the Masoretic edition in Hebrew and Aramaic. Occasionally the ancient versions are used as the basis for variant readings in the footnotes of the reference editions. In the New Testament the text followed, according to the policy of the American Bible Society at that time, was the Textus Receptus. Isaac Hall ascertained that Van Dyck used the edition of this text published by Mill. Dr. Van Dyck realized the shortcomings of this text, and with the permission of the Bible Society he indicated many variant readings in the footnotes of the Reference Bible. He noted especially variants found in the Syriac and in other Arabic versions.⁴⁸

Following the Masoretic Hebrew and the Greek Textus Receptus necessitated many textual departures from the Propaganda edition. For example, in Ruth 1 : 1-22 Smith-Van Dyck differs from the Propaganda in the basic text in thirty-three places; in Ephesians 1 : 1-23 Smith-Van Dyck differs in eleven places in the text translated.

3. Qualities of the Translation.

In the same chapters Smith-Van Dyck differs from the Propaganda edition in vocabulary and style. In Ruth 1 : 1-22 about eighty-five such changes are made, and in Ephesians 1 : 1-23 there are ninety-three changes. All agree that most of these changes are a great advance in both clarity and in classical standards of Arabic.

Noteworthy are some comments by the two chief editors on the style of their translation. In 1856 Smith wrote to Roediger that he always attempted to remain true to classical Arabic usage, but also to use only that part of the old language which is understood by the unlearned.⁴⁹ Van Dyck pointed out that an effort was made to vary the style of the Arabic according to the style of the original. In the "historical and

⁴⁷ On this revision of the Arabic Reference Bible see the work of Hoskins cited above and also Charles C. Torrey, "A New Edition of the Arabic Bible", in *The American Journal of Theology*, XXIII (1919): 105-107.

⁴⁸ Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

⁴⁹ "Aus einem Briefe von Dr. E. Smith, Beirut, d. 9 Mai, 1856", in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, X (1856): 813.

didactic parts the style is pure and simple, but in the poetical parts the style necessarily takes on the higher standard of the original".⁵⁰

C. *Evaluations of the Smith-Van Dyck Version*

A British Protestant wrote of this version that it is "recognized to be one of the finest of all Bible translations, a standard work which has taken its place among the literary treasures of that beautiful language [Arabic]".⁵¹

An unfavourable Catholic view is expressed in a letter by *Yūsuf al-Marīd*, Bishop of 'Arqā and Delegate of the Maronite Patriarch. He characterizes the Smith-Van Dyck Version as "full of defects and corruption, cutting off from it [the Divine Book] some holy books, denying them canonicity contrary to the doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church and its witness preserved from mistake and error".⁵²

High praise for this version has come from both Orthodox and Catholic scholars. *Ghubreen Jebara*, a learned Greek ecclesiastic of Beirut, spoke as follows in a public address in 1865: "But for the American Missionaries, the Word of God had well-nigh perished out of the language: but now through the labors of Dr. Eli Smith and Dr. Van Dyck, they have given us a translation so pure, so exact, so clear, and so classical, as to be acceptable to all classes and all sects".⁵³

The Catholic scholar J. F. Rhode refers to "the Protestant edition of Smith-Van Dyck" as "justly praised for its simple language and popular tone".⁵⁴

A very fair and generous tribute comes from the Catholic Dr. Georg Graf, the doyen of Christian-Arabic scholars: "the translation of the Hebrew of the Old Testament (the 'Apocrypha' was omitted) and of the Greek for the New Testament was done with the greatest care and special concern for maintaining a simple, popular style of speech together with the most exact linguistic correctness".⁵⁵

A Syrian Protestant writes as follows: "This translation . . . is one of the truest and most exact Arabic translations . . . and there is no doubt about its literalness . . . nor of the expression of the spirit of the book in the translation as in the original". At the same time this Protestant pastor admits that some improvements in wording and style could be made and that this version contains some Syrianisms which are not acceptable in Egypt.⁵⁶

Another way to evaluate this version is to test its effect on the spiritual life of people and churches. For almost ninety years the Smith-Van Dyck Version has been faithfully distributed by Bible Societies, by Protestant missions, and by national Protestant churches in the Near East. A survey

⁵⁰ Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 75.

⁵¹ R. H. Kilgour, "Arabic Versions of the Bible", in *The Moslem World*, VI, (1916): 388.

⁵² *Al-kitāb al-muqaddas*. Vol. I. Beirut: Matba'ah al-ābā' al-mursalīn al-yasū'iyīn, 1876, p. (4).

⁵³ Jessup, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 78.

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁵⁵ Graf I, p. 98.

⁵⁶ Trānjān, *op. cit.*, pp. 49, 50.

of the influence of this version in Arabic-speaking lands would be a study in itself. For example, in Egypt, which is best known to the author, the Smith-Van Dyck Version has helped to reform the Coptic Church, has developed a Bible-reading Protestant church, and has been one of the chief instruments in leading non-Christians to know Jesus Christ, the Living Word.

D. Possible Revision of the Smith-Van Dyck Version

Some have been suggesting that the Smith-Van Dyck Version should be extensively revised. Both Smith and Van Dyck, if they were living, would agree that improvements could be made. The New Testament is especially in need of revision from a textual standpoint, because it follows the Textus Receptus, which is certainly not the Greek text closest to the original. After a study of a proposed revision of Proverbs 4-6 the author approved of thirty-eight minor changes in these three chapters. Some (twenty-eight) of these changes would bring the Arabic closer to the Hebrew, and ten others would be clearer or more modern Arabic. A Cairo committee of which the author was a member, suggested eighty-six changes in the book of Ephesians. The textual changes in this book to conform to Nestle's Greek text number forty-one, of which nineteen were anticipated in the marginal readings or parentheses of the Smith-Van Dyck Reference edition. The proposed improvements in interpretation and style are forty-five, of which only two are found on the margin of the Reference edition.

On the other hand, the Protestant and some non-Protestant people of the Near East have come to love the Smith-Van Dyck Version as the King James is loved in the English-speaking world or as Luther's translation among the Germans. Some national Christian leaders fear that an extensive revision would only confuse both Christians and non-Christians. Decisions regarding revision will require not only vision and linguistic knowledge, but also practical wisdom.

IV

The Jesuit Version

Title: *Al-kitāb al-muqaddas*. [3 vols., quarto] Beirut: Matba'ah al-ābā' al-mursalīn al-yasū'īyīn. I, 1876; II, 1880; III, 1878.

A. Origin of the Jesuit Version.

One incentive to the production of the Jesuit Arabic Version was the success and wide distribution of the Protestant Version of Smith and Van Dyck. The letter of *Yūsuf al-Marīd*, Maronite Bishop of 'Arqā, quoted above, expresses this motive: "We have... hope that by the distribution of the Divine Book in Arabic in these countries the way will be blocked for the Protestants". Another aim of the Jesuit Version was to produce something of higher and more polished literary style than the simple and literal Smith-Van Dyck Version.

This Jesuit Arabic Version, as its name implies, was the work of the Jesuit Fathers in Beirut. The chief editor was Father Augustin Rodet (1826-1906). In addition to his work on the Arabic Bible, Rodet edited (with J. B. Belot) the five volumes of Arabic literary selections called *Nukhab al-Mulah*, Beirut, 1871.⁵⁷

Rodet's Syrian assistant was *Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī* (1847-1906), the son of *Nasīf al-Yāzījī*, who worked with Eli Smith on the Protestant Arabic Bible. Sheikh Ibrāhīm taught at the Jesuit College and at the Patriarchal School of St. John Chrysostom in Beirut. He worked with his father on several literary enterprises. His published works include many volumes of literary criticism and some poems. He also edited a literary journal.⁵⁸

Cardinal Barnabo, Prefect of the Propaganda in Rome, directed that the work should be carried out under the advice of the Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was Joseph Valerga when the enterprise began. After the death of the latter, his successor, Vincentius Bracco, gave encouragement to the work. The finished product bears Archbishop Bracco's official approval.

The Imprimerie Catholique in Beirut issued Vol. I, containing Genesis through Esther in 1876; Vol. II, Job through II Maccabees, came out in 1880; and Vol. III, the New Testament, in 1878. The books follow the order of the Latin Vulgate.

B. Nature of the Jesuit Version.

1. Format.

When one opens the Jesuit Version one is immediately impressed by the clear and beautiful type, similar to that used in Fluegel's edition of the Koran. This font was procured at Istanbul through the efforts of the Moderator of the Jesuits in Syria, R.P. Ambrosius Monnot. The varied decorations at the beginnings of chapters and at the ends of some chapters and the enclosures for the verse numbers also add to the artistic appearance of the book. With good reason this Jesuit Bible was honoured at Paris as a masterpiece of printing. The Imprimerie Catholique can be proud of the technical beauty of the Jesuit Arabic Version.

⁵⁷ On Rodet, see Graf, IV, p. 241.

⁵⁸ For details on *Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī* and his work, see Graf, Vol. IV, pp. 323 - 324.

Vol. I has a Preface of two pages in both Latin and Arabic. Then follow nine pages of commendations by Oriental Catholic ecclesiastics. This volume contains the books, as in the Vulgate, from Genesis through Esther. Notes on these books occupy pages 879-896. After page 896 is an unnumbered page explaining unusual Arabic words and words employed in unusual senses. Finally come two pages of corrigenda.

Vol. II contains the rest of the Roman Catholic Old Testament, Job through II Maccabees. Pages 831-903 give notes on these books.

Vol. III begins with an Introduction to the New Testament, pages (1)-(13). After the text of the New Testament books is a catalogue of Old Testament verses quoted in the New (pages 465-483). Notes on the New Testament books occupy pages 485-523. An index to the most important subjects treated in the notes follows, pages 524-526. Finally comes an alphabetical index to the contents of the Bible.

The reduced one-volume reprint of 1951 omits some of the above features. The last two items mentioned under Vols. I and III are not found in this convenient edition.

2. Texts used in the Jesuit Version.

The basic text followed was not the Vulgate, but the original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic in the Old Testament, and Greek in the Apocryphal books and the New Testament. However, the Preface states that the Vulgate is followed where faith and morals are concerned. For example, I John 5 : 7, 8 has the doctrinal additions of the Vulgate, which are found in only a few late Greek manuscripts. The editors also used the Septuagint and the Peshitta. Both the Propaganda edition of 1671 and the Smith-Van Dyck Version of 1865 were consulted. Nevertheless, the Jesuit Version is a new translation, not a mere revision.

3. Qualities of the Translation.

The qualities of the Jesuit translation become apparent when comparison is made with the Smith-Van Dyck Version. In Ruth 1 : 1-22 there are three variations from Smith-Van Dyck in basic text, only one of which follows the Hebrew more closely (vs. 5) and one of which returns to the Propaganda (vs. 21). Fifty-five changes from the Smith-Van Dyck version are made in vocabulary and style in this one chapter. Twelve of these are a return to the Propaganda. Three of these changes are better Arabic (vss. 2, 4, 17). But in ten places the changes take the Jesuit farther from the Hebrew (vss. 1, 2, 7). Jesuit (like Smith-Van Dyck) failed to follow the Propaganda and the Hebrew in indicating the feminine plural gender at the end of verse 19 and at the beginning of verse 20.

In Ephesians 1 : 1-23 Jesuit differs from Smith-Van Dyck in basic text in seven places, four of which (vss. 1, 10, 11, 23) are a return to Propaganda. In the whole book of Ephesians (six chapters) the Jesuit follows a different text from Smith-Van Dyck in seventeen places which agree with the Nestle critical edition of the Greek. The Jesuit in Ephesians 1 makes forty-three changes in vocabulary, eleven of which return to Propaganda. Two of these changes are better Arabic (vs. 2), and two are closer to the Greek (vss. 7, 18), but five are farther from the Greek (vss. 3, 12, 13, 19). In two places in this chapter accuracy is sacrificed to achieve smoother Arabic. In Ephesians 1 : 15 the Greek *kagô*, "I also",

is not represented, though it is in Propaganda and Smith-Van Dyck. In verse 19 *hyperballon*, "exceeding", is not translated, though both Propaganda and Smith-Van Dyck expressed it. A Protestant committee (of which the author was a member) working in Cairo 1950-1951 approved of twenty-eight of the vocabulary changes by Jesuit in the six chapters of Ephesians.

Many of the above changes in the Jesuit are in the direction of a more literary vocabulary and a more flowing style than Smith-Van Dyck. It has been seen, however, that sometimes these aims are achieved at the expense of accuracy. In general, when variants from Smith-Van Dyck occur, the Jesuit tends to be farther from the original.

C. *Evaluations of the Jesuit Version.*

Van Dyck's comment on the Jesuit Version is perhaps slightly invidious: "It is a fair translation generally, and differs in very slight particulars from mine (so far as I have traced it) — and that only for the sake of differing from the Protestant Version".⁵⁹ (Cf. B. 3 above.)

A similar judgment is given by Oscar Löfgren, who on the basis of a collation of the two versions in Daniel called the Jesuit "a stylistic revision" of Smith-Van Dyck.⁶⁰

Appreciation of the Jesuit Version is expressed by a Syrian Protestant pastor, *Jamīl Hannā Trānjān*. The language and style, says he, are universally admitted to be higher than Smith-Van Dyck. The whole Jesuit Version, however, is in a uniform, polished language, without expressing the difference between the simple style of the original in prose narratives and the more elaborate language of the original in the prophetic books or the epistles. Trānjān points out some cases where the Jesuit is closer to the original meaning, but also others where it is farther from the Hebrew and the Greek.⁶¹

The high place of the Jesuit Version among the Catholics of the Near East is thus expressed by Dr. George Graf: "The Beirut Catholic Bible is valued because of its textual faithfulness, to which elegance of style must sometimes be subordinated (cf. B. 3 above), and especially because of its whole typographical format. With its new editions and portions, it rules the entire Uniat East".⁶²

Conversation with Egyptian Christians leads to the conclusion that, though the Jesuit is admired by the learned, the Van-Dyck is more understandable for the common man. The author's students in the Protestant Seminary in Cairo sometimes had to refer to an Arabic dictionary when confronted with words in the Jesuit Version.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Hall, *op. cit.* p. 280.

⁶⁰ *Op. cit.* p. 71.

⁶¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 44-47.

⁶² Graf, Vol. I, p. 100.

CONCLUSION

The chief values of each of these four Arabic translations might be summed up briefly as follows: the Polyglots — textual criticism; Propaganda — first Arabic Bible to be reprinted for popular use; Smith-Van Dyck — literal accuracy and simplicity together with wide distribution; Jesuit — high literary style and vocabulary.

Some of the principles concerning Bible translation which may be deduced from a study of the origin and nature of these Arabic versions are as follows. The lessons from the Polyglot edition are largely negative warnings. The quarrels between Sionita and Editor Le Jay show the importance of clear financial arrangements. The misunderstandings between Sionita and Ecchellensis illustrate the value of definite leadership and avoidance of jealousy. This ill-assorted Bible from various basic texts, though of interest to scholars, is not suited to general use, which requires following one text and uniform principles of translation.

The Propaganda Version also illustrates some dangers to be avoided by Bible translators. The confusion caused by trying to follow both Arabic manuscripts and the Vulgate shows the importance of consistency in the text to be followed. The fact that this version was produced in Rome, away from an Arabic-speaking environment, may account for some of its lack of whole-hearted acceptance in the East and indicates the value of preparing translations on the field where possible. The delay caused by the deaths of editors shows the desirability of prompt filling of vacancies by translators who will carry the work to completion. For over a hundred years this version existed only in three large and expensive volumes with the Latin Vulgate. Only in the 19th century did Protestants issue one-volume editions of the Arabic (without Apocrypha) suitable for popular use.

The Smith-Van Dyck Version is an example of the importance of method in translation. Following texts in the original languages was a great improvement over the textual confusion of the preceding Arabic Bibles. The replacement of Smith's eclectic text of the New Testament by the Textus Receptus in the final printing shows the advisability of following some accepted text. An important feature of the Smith-Van Dyck method was the securing of varied criticism from national scholars (Christian and non-Christian), from missionaries in other Arabic-speaking countries, from European Arabists, and from unlearned nationals. This version balances several translation virtues: it follows the original very conscientiously, but yet uses idiomatic Arabic; it is simple and understandable, but yet is classical in vocabulary and grammar.

The Jesuit Version exhibits attractiveness of artistic type, decoration, and format. The high literary vocabulary and style, though admired by the learned, have the disadvantage of placing the Bible above the understanding and sympathy of the common people. Furthermore, it is a questionable principle to sacrifice accuracy of translation to smooth Arabic, as the Jesuit occasionally does. The inconsistency of following the original languages most of the time and the Vulgate part of the time is a retrogression after Smith-Van Dyck.

All the above versions show the advantages of collaboration between

the Western and Eastern scholars. In all of the above cases the Occidentals furnished the capital and the mechanics of printing, and in the latter two the textual criticism and the knowledge of the original languages. The important contribution of the Orientals in every case has been the innate knowledge of Arabic language and usage. As Christian technical scholarship continues to develop in the Near East, the share of Orientals will increase in future revisions of the Arabic Bible.
